



The Lawrence Food Garden Tour
Saturday, May 30, 2009
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

This free self-guided tour is offered to the community in hopes that it will inspire and encourage new and experienced gardeners alike. In this packet, we have compiled brief biographies of each garden, written by the gardeners themselves. We hope that you take time to visit each garden on the tour. If you have comments or questions about this first annual tour, please e-mail Jessi Asmussen (jjia80@mac.com) or Amber Lehrman (jalehrman@yahoo.com). We hope this community-supported event is successful and continues in future years.

We would like to thank the sponsors who made advertising and transportation possible:

*The Merc
Vinland Valley Nursery
Lawrence Sustainability Network
New Boston Co-op*

*Cottin's Hardware and Rental
Clinton Parkway Nursery
Sunrise Garden Center*

1. Faith Community Garden, 1020 Kasold, on the lawn of Faith Church of the Nazarene.

We are a new community garden in our first year of planting. We started with about 15 members and have been growing steadily. Our goal is to provide food for ourselves and our local food pantries and to encourage community through the garden. Each member has one or more plots reserved for his or her own use and also participates in keeping the garden growing through communal work days. As a community, we maintain an orchard and a bulk crop area (corn and dry beans) as well as the area around the garden. We meet every Sunday from 3-5 p.m. to work on communal projects and our own plots. It's a great time to ask questions and do things together!

Any unreserved plots are used to raise food for charity and are maintained by everyone in the garden. Among the members, we are growing tomatoes, peppers, green peas, beans, cucumbers, squash, greens, turnips, beets, broccoli, cauliflower, and several other vegetables in our plots. We are also planting apple, peach, plum, cherry, and pear trees, raspberry and blackberry bushes, and starting a strawberry patch this year. Our garden is truly a family garden. We have people of all ages represented and we have a children's area where kids can help plant and take care of their own vegetables and flowers.

We have used the lasagna method of layering material on top of the ground instead of digging/tilling into it for our raised beds. We are committed to organic principals, although we're all still very new at it.

If you'd like to join in, just come by the garden from 3-5 p.m. any Sunday! Individual plots can be reserved for \$15 for the first plot and \$10 for each plot after that. All funds go toward expanding the garden and providing garden materials (tools, compost, mulch, etc.). We do have some donated plots for families that can't afford the reservation fee.

2. Jeremy and Amber Lehrman's Garden, 2409 Brookside Dr., Brookside subdivision.

We are an organic home garden focused on growing what our family will eat and improving the quality of our diet through homegrown produce. We were inspired by Path To Freedom, a family in Pasadena, California, that grows over 6,000 lbs of produce on a 0.25 acre lot. We strive to have a garden that is both attractive (since it is in our front yard) and extremely productive. We use a combination of containers, raised beds, and tilled plots to grow food. We use natural soil amendments like hay, compost, and manure to improve our heavy clay soil.

We began in 2006 by expanding from one 4'x12' raised bed to four raised beds totaling about 300 sq. feet. In 2007, we added four more raised beds, planted four fruit trees and 125 strawberry plants which brought our total garden area to 700 sq. feet of raised beds and 500 sq. ft. of other food production. In the spring of 2008, we added three more raised beds and began gardening in the space between our sidewalks and the street. We also planted four more fruit trees and six raspberry plants. We began experimenting with succession planting to improve our

overall yield resulting in a total harvest for 2008 of 1400 lbs. Over the fall and winter, we have converted the remaining lawn areas around our house to be ready to plant this year. That will bring our total garden space to 1000 sq. ft. of raised beds and about 3000 sq. ft. of other growing space. We hope to raise more than 2,500 lbs. of food for our family this year and potentially sell some produce to help offset the costs of seed, hay and manure.

This year we are growing tomatoes, peppers, squash, broccoli, cauliflower, leeks, onions, garlic, potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, amaranth, lettuce, radishes, beets, turnips, green peas, black-eyed peas, cabbage, chard, dry beans, celery, carrots, asparagus, rhubarb, strawberries, eggplant, okra, twenty different herbs, and probably a few other things that looked good in the seed catalog!

Our goal is to produce all our family's vegetables from our lot and have enough surplus to cover our costs. Our big projects for this year include starting our medicinal herb garden, installing a permanent fence around the garden to keep the rabbits out, and possibly building a small greenhouse.

3. Jane Gibson and Jim Carpenter's Garden, 1845 Learnard Ave., northwest corner of 19th street and Learnard Ave. (Park on Learnard).

We started gardening with our two daughters on Learnard in 1995, the year after we moved to the house with its over-sized lot. That first year, we built raised beds on the east side of the garage that fed us delicious salads and salsa. We're big fans of fresh salsas such as pico de gallo, a traditional garnish in Latin America.

Pico de Gallo

Chop 3-4 fresh tomatoes

Add a bunch of chopped cilantro

1/2 to 1 chopped fresh onion

3-4 cloves of garlic, minced

1 chopped jalapeño if you like the heat

Salt to taste

After a few years in this tiny garden spot, we decided to expand. From a daring corner in 2005, we'd taken the whole west side of the front yard by 2007. Our most successful crops have been tomatoes, peppers, beans, cucumbers, tomatillos, and sweet potatoes. One of our favorite recipes is a variant on a Moroccan stew served with a cucumber-peanut relish.

Moroccan Sweet Potato Stew

Saute a chopped onion with 1/4 tsp chipotle peppers or 1 jalapeño and 1 tsp ground cumin

Add a quart of tomatoes, 2 1/2 cups of water, and one cup of green lentils

Cook for five minutes and stir in 1/4 cup of tomato paste and 2 pounds of sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed

Cook on low-medium for another 30 minutes, adding water if needed, until potatoes and lentils are tender.

Add salt to taste

Top with relish and serve hot over steamed rice

Cucumber Relish

Toast 1/2 cup raw peanuts until brown; cool and set aside

In a small bowl, add 1/4 cup chopped cilantro to 1/2 of a large cucumber, chopped

Toss with the juice of 1/2 fresh lime and a little salt

Just before serving, toss the peanuts with the cucumber mix

Top Moroccan Sweet Potato Stew with a heap of this delicious relish

The year 2007 was also the first year we added fruit to our growing experiment in urban farming. Delicious, sweet, fat blackberries found their way into pies, tassies, and sorbet the summer of 2008. We were so inspired, we added a cold-tolerant brown turkey fig, blueberry bushes, and a dwarf orchard of cherries, pears, peaches, and apricots to the property. This year, we're planting strawberries and rhubarb between rows of asparagus and cannot wait to try a strawberry-rhubarb pie.

Blackberry Sorbet

Dissolve about 3/4 cups of sugar in 2/3 cups of water in a saucepan over low heat on the stove. Let the clear mixture cool. If you dislike the seeds in blackberries, you should press 2 cups of blackberries through a sieve to

remove them. In a blender, add the pulp, or whole blackberries if seeds are okay with you to the sugar syrup and blend. Pour into a container and refrigerate until you are ready to put it in an ice cream freezer. Process like any ice cream until it is frozen, a beautiful purply pink, and delicious.

We also began years ago to grow medicinal herbs. Jane's work in the tropics required insect repellent, so rather than risk the health consequences of DEET, we made a successful mosquito repellent out of catnip, rosemary, and an alcohol-water solution. We also make our own expectorant from hyssop, a cough suppressant from horehound, an echinacea tincture, and anti-viral teas from sage and lemon balm. Lots of good books can teach anyone to do this.

Infrastructure became more and more important as the project grew. In 2008, we began to develop our rain-based irrigation system and hope to have it up and running soon. This year, 2009, we're growing our own chickens. We hope they will enrich the compost we've been making from kitchen, yard, and garden waste over the years. Both the garden and we who enjoy their fresh eggs will benefit from the added nutrition.

We'd be remiss if we didn't mention the best, most rewarding part of gardening. The benefits of healthy food and the pleasures of growing things are hard to overstate, but nothing competes with the pleasure of gardening together as a family. Our daughters are grown, married, and have children of their own now, and a niece has joined us in the garden. These young women and their little ones have grown up in a world where gardening is as routine as cooking. The children dig, plant, weed, and harvest with the grownups and, we're pretty sure, they'll have gardens of their own some day where they'll teach their own children and grandchildren to do the same.

4. Lauren Imel's Garden, 1836 New Hampshire, garden is in the backyard behind our garage; right next to the east-west alley between 18th and 19th.

My husband and I bought our house in June 2007, and I started our garden in the spring of 2008. We are fortunate enough to live right next door to two very experienced organic gardeners who were able to help me get started and have been a valuable resource as I have begun my gardening journey.

Our backyard is very shaded, so we decided to start with the location that gets the most sunlight. Unfortunately this is also a low-lying area so I have learned that my beds have to be built up rather high to prevent my plants from drowning. At this point my beds are all in-ground and I have used soil from the area as well as composted manure to raise the rows high enough that the water is able to drain away. I started with six small plots last year that I have since "connected" into three longer rows and have now added three more that I plan to start gardening this year.

Last year I used organic fertilizer as well as some aged manure to enhance the soil. I have not used any chemical fertilizer or pesticides on anything I have grown or on my soil. I luckily did not have a terrible problem with insects last year, and we have put rabbit fence up around the perimeter to keep out as many little critters (as well as our dog) as we can. I planted a combination of seeds (green beans, spinach) and transplanted plants (bell and hot peppers) last year, and planted some garlic cloves last fall.

I started a compost pile last year at the same time I started plotting my garden, but have not been able to use any of the compost just yet. The water I use for the garden comes exclusively from the rain barrels that are located under the gutter spouts behind our garage. This has proven to be very useful as there is no outdoor water source near the garden. The rain barrels have been incredibly easy to maintain, and have saved us from spending extra money on watering as well as moved us toward the goal of having a garden that is as self-sustained as possible.

I felt very blessed to be able to get started and have a small garden in my first year of owning a home, and I am very hopeful that I will be able to grow my garden in size as well as quality and variety in the coming years. My vision for my garden is that I will be able to continue to maintain what I have started as well as to expand as much as I can while being able to care for it myself. I hope that one day it will be completely self-sustaining and that I will be able to feed my family with more and more food that I have grown myself.

5. Kevin Prather and Jessi Asmussen's Garden, 1832 New Hampshire Street.

We are in our fourth season growing in our "urban farm garden." We began with 100 square feet in our extra long backyard and have increased that number each year to our current size of about 2,000 square feet, including beds in our front yard, back yard and a neighbor's yard. This is our second year growing and selling to others.

We use permanent raised beds to grow culinary and medicinal herbs, vegetables and fruits. Our soil is mainly clay-loam and we use a variety of amendments to help with soil-structure and fertility. By growing cover crops, as well as top-dressing with composted horse manure, homemade compost, fish emulsion fertilizer, spent coffee grounds and organic fertilizers, we have been able to slowly improve the soil. We try to keep the soil's health a primary focus: we don't step on the beds to minimize compaction, we use no-till methods, and even cut dead plants out instead of pulling them to keep the roots in the soil and provide food for the microorganisms living in it. We are doing all this in hopes that one day we will be able to have great soil structure and fertility without off-the-farm inputs as well as fulfilling our desire to grow the most nutritious food possible.

Other goals for the future are to continue to establish perennial fruits and vegetables including, apple and cherry trees, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, asparagus, mulberry trees, rhubarb, elderberry, gooseberry, persimmon and paw paw. We are also learning how to save seed from year to year and so we plant mainly open-pollinated, not genetically modified seed. This year we are also going to be experimenting with growing buckwheat as a cover crop and beneficial insect attractor.

6. Bob Gent's Garden at 1801 Barker.

A new and enthusiastic gardener and chicken keeper. This first-year garden shows the process of creating beds as well as plant selection, specifically for a chicken-friendly garden.

7. The Campus Garden on Louisiana St., between 13th & 14th St.

The Campus Garden is taken care of by EARTH, a Center for Community Outreach program, with more than fifty student volunteers. The group meets twice a week for a couple of hours to maintain the garden, though volunteers are encouraged to stop by any time to garden. It provides a great hands-on learning opportunity for students who are living in a dorm or small living space with no outdoor area for them to have a garden of their own.

It serves as an example of sustainability. Volunteers plant seed donations from local businesses like Sunrise Nursery, Cottin's, and Clinton Parkway Nursery. The seeds would normally just be thrown out, but instead, the seeds are planted and given back to the community to provide food for those in need. It shows how food can be provided on a very local level. Food does not necessarily need to be shipped from afar in trucks or other transportation means that cause large amounts of carbon dioxide to be released into the air. Food from the garden is also naturally grown instead of being subjected to possibly harmful packaging methods.

For more information about the Campus Garden, please e-mail earth@ku.edu

8. Lawrence Community Garden Project, 921 Mississippi, located south of Cork and Barrel.

In its sixteenth year, this community garden utilizes ten individual plots. Members share the perennial grapes and berries growing along the fence.

9. The Casbah Market Garden, 803 Vermont St.

The garden is located in the northern of two empty lots in between Headmasters hair salon and Dobbin's Dentistry. The most local produce sold at The Casbah Market is grown here, less than two hundred feet away.

10. Terry & Iris Wilkinson's Garden, 410 Elm.

This North Lawrence garden creatively shows that you do not need a lot of space or full sun to grow food for your family. Featured are a kitchen garden, perennial berry, rhubarb and asparagus patch, and an herb bed.

11. Eastside Community Garden, 905 Pennsylvania.

The Eastside Community Garden, originally called the East Lawrence Community Garden, has occupied a vacant lot at 905 Pennsylvania Street in East Lawrence since 2003. The transformation of this bit of land from a gravel parking lot into a productive community garden was accomplished with the help of a Community Development Block Grant, as part of the Neighborhood Improvement Plan, in partnership with the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association, the Lawrence Community Garden Project, and the City of Lawrence.

Community Development Department. The grant proposal and its implementation were the result of a significant amount of quality volunteer work on the part of some dedicated people. Currently, seventeen people grow vegetables, herbs, and flowers in plots measuring approximately 9 X 12 feet apiece, as well as a communal flower and herb garden, and a strawberry patch. We have several workdays and a few bonfire barbecues per year, and the gardeners cooperate in keeping the common areas mowed and weeded.

The transformation of this piece of ground has taken a few years. The fenced gravel lot was used for storage of power-boats as part of Apple Valley Boat Sales and Service, situated across the alley throughout the 1970's and 1980's. First, the City of Lawrence brought in several truckloads of regular top soil, which needed to be amended with a great deal of compost in order to reach its full potential. We have made great use of the City's semiannual giveaway of composted yard waste to achieve the productive soil we enjoy today. Several people have had great results by adding gypsum to help with the soil's high clay content. The gardeners spent the first few years carrying water drawn from a large tank situated at the north edge of the lot, until the city installed a water spigot on the site. Currently, we have a nice little corrugated metal shed for tool and supply storage, as well as a network of garden hoses capable of reaching every garden plot. This year, we have been fortunate to consult with Trish Jackson, a soil scientist at KU, who has taken soil samples at our site as part of her doctoral research on urban vegetable gardens. We are interested to know the results of this research.

We have a good relationship with the current owners of the land, John and Arch Naramore, who have graciously allowed us to use their property free of charge for the past seven years. We are grateful to these men for giving us this wonderful opportunity to provide residents of our neighborhood with a place to grow some of our own food, and to enjoy the many personal benefits of gardening in a community setting. Ownership of the lot will soon change hands. A group headed by the president of our neighborhood association, Phil Collison, has signed a contract to purchase the land, which will extend our tenancy for a period of time. Closing is scheduled for June 1st. This is the best possible result we could have hoped for, and we look forward to gardening here for the foreseeable future. Many thanks to Mr. Collison and his partners!

12. Kansas Mutual Aid Community Garden, East side of the 1200 block of New York.

Begun last year on the plot of a demolished house (don't worry, we got the soil tested!), the Kansas Mutual Aid Garden between 12th and 13th on New York Street is a community garden open to anyone interested in growing some food. The garden is made up of mostly raised beds, with a couple different techniques being used in different areas. We've got some strawberries, echinacea, and asparagus among an array of annuals. The gardeners themselves have all different ranges of experience and have been meeting for work-days on Wednesdays at 4:00 and Saturdays at noon. Food grown at the KMA Garden is eaten by the gardeners or given away, so it is not a market garden. We have been having a great time so far this year, digging up some fresh plots and working on getting the garden to be more sustainable by having a water collection system (last summer we actually didn't water the garden, but food still grew!). Our garden is open to anyone, so just come by on a work day if you're interested!